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New Orleans Mystery

By ROBERT S. ALLEN and PAUL SCOTT

IN HIS CONTROVERSIAL probe of President Kennedy's assassination, New Orleans' District Attorney Jim Garrison is apparently attaching great importance to evidence given the Warren Commission by Mrs. Sylvia Odio, a member of a militant Cuban refugee group.

Records here show that his investigators have obtained from the files of the National Archives copies of Mrs. Odio's testimony, "working papers" of the commission, and three FBI reports covering the investigation of her story linking two Cubans to Oswald.

One of the FBI's reports and the staff documents, which were secret at the time the Warren Commission issued its report, have since been declassified by the Justice Department and are now available to researchers.

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IN BOTH HER TESTIMONY to the Commission and FBI interviews, Mrs. Odio reported that three men, including one she believed to be Oswald, came to her room in Dallas in September, 1963, to seek aide for a Cuban exile-group she helped organize in Puerto Rico.

Mrs. Odio, who moved to Florida from Dallas after the assassination, identified two of her callers as Cubans and the third an American, introduced as Leon Oswald. She said the trio told her they had just arrived from New Orleans.

One of the Cubans, known only as Leopoldo, telephoned next day and said he wanted to introduce Leon Oswald into the anti-Castro underground. Leopoldo said Leon Oswald was a former Marine and quoted him as saying: "Cubans don't have any guts because President Kennedy should have been assassinated after the Bay of Pigs."

Although commission members tried to knock down Mrs. Odio's testimony, the Cuban woman stuck by her original story and to this day she has refused to change it.

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PROBABLY THE MOST INteresting information that Garrison's investigators discovered in the FBI report was a statement that Mrs. Odio had attempted suicide since appearing before the commission.

According to its own report, the FBI learned of the unreported suicide attempt when agents tried unsuccessfully to arrange another interview with Mrs. Odio, as follows:

"When telephonically contacted on the morning of Oct. 1, 1964, in order to arrange an interview, Sylvia Odio advised that she had an appointment at 11:30 a.m. that day with her doctor.

"The interview was then set for 1 p.m. Shortly after making this arrangement for interview, Mr. Maurice Ferre, a member of Ferre family with extensive industrial holdings in South Florida and Puerto Rico, contacted the Miami office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to state he is a personal friend of Sylvia Odio.

"He wished to advise that Odio was then under the care of Dr. Irwin Jacobs, psychiatrist, at Miami and had [illegible]

[illegible]

the FBI contact with Mrs. Odio ended at that time. However, Justice Department insiders report that the "Odio story" is still under active investigation.

Garrison, who launched his sensational probe several months ago, has investigators in Florida trying to locate Mrs. Odio for further questioning and to determine why she attempted to take her own life.

The death of David Ferrie, the pilot who was a central figure in the New Orleans' inquiry, has caused Garrison to intensify his investigation of the leads Mrs. Odio originally furnished the commission.

One report being checked is that Ferrie, no relation to the Ferre mentioned in the FBI report, flew Oswald and the Cubans to Dallas from New Orleans on the day Mrs. Odio says they visited her.

Commission documents on file in the archives indicate that its investigators and the FBI went to great length to check all possible means of transportation by which Oswald might have made the trip. There is no evidence that Oswald ever made the trip or was in Dallas at the time. One journey which Oswald did make in September, 1963, was from New Orleans by bus to Mexico City.

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ALSO BEING PROBED BY Garrison is whether Oswald carried on his person "a curriculum vitae" which covered several sheets of notepaper, presumably dealing with information on his pro-Castro activities in the U.S.

Two British tourists on the same bus indicated that Oswald was looking at a document, similar to those furnished undercover agents by CIA or KGB, the Soviet's secret espionage-intelligence agency.

Within an hour of his arrival in the Mexican capital Oswald registered at the Hotel del Comercio, which he used throughout his visit. This is one of the hotels in which both CIA and KGB keeps agents.